

Systematic reviews of prevalence data to inform population-level mental health intervention priorities: policy and practice challenges in the context of COVID-19.

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Effectiveness review on population-level mental health interventions to inform policy and practice decision-making in a post-pandemic context.

Lack of clarity regarding which mental health symptoms were more elevated in the general public.

N=798 records identified

N=710 retrieval

N=15 not retrieved

N=98 included

N=612 excluded

Prevalence data

Identified when producing the covid-19 living map of systematic reviews.



Anxiety, depression and PTSD were the most commonly reported outcomes along with sleep difficulties and overall emotional and psychological wellbeing.

- Ongoing reliance of cross-sectional primary studies.
- Only two reviews synthesized evidence from studies with pre-pandemic measures..
- The size of the evidence-base was difficult to ascertain at the outcome level with most reviews reporting the number of studies rather than the total number of participants, raising further questions about the magnitude of the problem.
- Only one review conducted a meta-analysis on the impact of covid-19 on children and young people.

Investigating systematic reviews to inform the scope of an effectiveness review supported us to have more meaningful and empirically grounded dialogue with stakeholders.

Further exploration of the value of drawing on review-level evidence of prevalence data to inform systematic reviews of interventions is warranted to consider how it can increase the production of policy and practice relevant reviews.

